Theme: Connecting Sahelian Youth For Peace and Prosperity

#YouthConnektSahel

30th Nov - 2nd Dec. 2021
Dakar, Senegal
The Regional YouthConnekt Sahel Forum 2021
Connecting Sahelian Youth for Peace and Prosperity

30 November - 2nd December 2021

King Fahd Palace Hotel
Dakar, Senegal
Working in tandem with sub-regional and national initiatives to accelerate results at scale and with impact, the YCA Hub accomplishes its mandate by:

1. Coordinating a global network to create a continental ecosystem for African youth;

2. Sharing experience and knowledge on program and policy design, youth initiatives, fund setting and reporting;

3. Providing a conduit for resources at scale and data on youth to up-skill and finance African youth-led enterprises.

The Sahel YouthConnekt is a branch of the YouthConnekt Africa (YCA), which is the pan-African platform with the vision of connecting African youth for socio-economic transformation. Headquartered in Rwanda, the YCA Hub has since 2017 prioritized the empowerment and full participation of youth in the achievement of Africa’s SDGs mandate, the AU 2063 agenda, and AU Youth Charter.
Since the launch of YouthConnekt Africa, several African countries have demonstrated strong interest in learning and replicating the model in their respective countries. As a result, YouthConnekt has scaled up beyond Rwanda to 23 African countries and providing critical support to youth, promoting innovative and promising practices, and scaling-up key local solutions as integrated youth empowerment models. This is being done not only empower youth including the most vulnerable, but also contribute towards local and national development.

The YouthConnekt Sahel Forum is an extension of this Africa-wide agenda and effort. In addition, it will provide a platform to enable Sahelian youth exchange innovative ideas, explore their potential to the fullest, brainstorm on opportunities and home-grown solutions to achieving peace, prosperity and resilience. The overarching goal if this important platform is to inspire, connect, engage and empower young people in the region, to change the Sahel narrative into a land of opportunities, investment and prosperity. This platform will also allow young people, particularly the most vulnerable, to move beyond the challenges and discover the potential in them and the opportunities offered by the Sahel region.

Following the UN-Generation Unlimited Sahel (GenU Sahel) launch by the UN Deputy Secretary-General on the 1 November 2021, YCA is collaborating with GenU Sahel and other partners to launch the Sahel YouthConnekt Hub. GenU Sahel's operational framework focuses on building a ready workforce in the sub-region. It calls for an urgent, collective, and robust political leadership in Sahel countries. GenU works in new ways to align, amplify, and multiply efforts of the public, private and multilateral sectors with and for youth in an innovative partnership paradigm with a view to mobilizing catalytic funding to accelerate action in the most vulnerable Sahel populations with a focus on young women.
YouthConnekt has scaled up beyond Rwanda to 23 African countries.
The Youth Connekt Sahel Forum (YCSF)

The Sahel is a youthful region with unique social, political, and geographical standing in Africa. The youth is the biggest asset of the region, if it is valued and utilized properly it will lead to peace, prosperity and stability in the region.

The YouthConnekt Sahel Forum (YCSF) 2021 will be an annual convening event that connects youth from across the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) and beyond with policy influencers, political leaders, and public, private and development sector institutions as well as the civil society to engage, discuss, design and accelerate youth empowerment efforts in the region. The YCSF intends to create a platform for Sahelian youth to voice their issues, promote local solutions and rebrand the region beyond fragility, crisis and violence. Moreover, YCSF will enable the youth to set the vision for the region and lead the change process for the transformation of the region through local solutions, innovations, disruptions and with positive engagement. This year’s forum will focus on “Connecting Sahelian Youth for Peace and Prosperity” and will be discussing various aspects of youth empowerment - economic, social, digital, and political empowerment of young Sahelians. The YCSF 2021 is a testament of the flagship collaboration between the UN and GenU Sahel under the auspices of the UN Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel and signifies UNDP’s contribution to the UNISS and its Support Plan tenets to empower youth.

Held in Dakar, the capital city of Senegal, the YouthConnekt Sahel Forum will offer, over three days, a combination of informative, high-level plenaries, panel discussions, keynote speeches, small group workshops, awards, learning visits, exhibition and cultural events.

The YCSF 2021 is organized in line with the ongoing flagship collaboration between the UN and Generation Unlimited (GenU) under the auspices of the UN Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel. YC Sahel and the Forum is UNDP contribution and articulation of youth programmes to the UNISS and its Support Plan tenets to empower youth.
The YouthConnekt Sahel Forum (YCSF’21) will take place in Dakar, Senegal from 30th November to 3rd December 2021, at King Fahd Palace Hotel. Over three (3) days, YCSF will deliver a combination of informative, high-level plenaries, panel discussions, keynote speeches, small group workshops, awards, learning visits, exhibition and cultural events.

The YCSF 2021 will be organized in a hybrid mode targeting 500 in-person delegates and at least 2,500 participating virtually from across the Sahel and beyond with a specific effort to ensure participation of young women and youth with disabilities. The virtual participation will be unlimitedly open to interested youth and partners. Physical presence will strictly adhere to the COVID-19 preventive measures. The Forum will feature an opening ceremony to launch the YouthConnekt Sahel Initiative & YouthConnekt Senegal chapter followed by plenary, parallel sessions and interspersed with a cross border trade show and exhibition.

The programme will be structured as follows:
Expected Outputs

01. YouthConnekt Sahel & the national YouthConnekt Senegal Chapter officially launched.

02. Tangible pathways developed to engage, empower and support youth in the Sahel.

03. Key partnerships at global, regional and national levels to enhance inclusive youth empowerment in the region built.

04. Sahelian youth development solutions and innovations, value chains and sources of youth employment and sustainable livelihoods showcased and promoted.

05. Youth connected to peers, role models, key development players and informed about available opportunities for enhanced employability, voices amplification and greater engagement.

06. Demonstrated support and articulation of UN-GenU youth partnership in Sahel.
Overview of Participants

Guest of Honor:
H.E. President of the Republic of Senegal

Annadif Khatir Mahamat Saleh Special Representative of the Secretary General for UNOWAS
Abdoulaye Mar Dieye, USG/Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel
Ministers of Youth from Sahel countries
Ahunna Eziakonwa, ASG-Regional Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa
Oulie Keita, Executive Director - YouthConnekt Africa Hub
Kevin Frey, CEO-Generation Unlimited (GenU)
Siaka Coulibaly, Resident Coordinator, UN Senegal
Governments Officials
Development Partners
Private Sector Representatives
Civil Society, Innovation & Incubation labs
Academia Representatives
Religious leaders
Youth (Entrepreneurs, youth leaders, innovators, students, artists, youth in diaspora and youth with disabilities)
Media
Call to Action: A Leap for Sahel Youth

Day One: Tuesday 30 November 2021

09:00 – 10:45  Arrival and registration
10:45 – 11:00  Music and Poem

11:00 – 12:30  Opening Ceremony (Main Auditorium)

Call to Action/Youth’s event framing remarks
Youth Leaders - Mr. Sobel Aziz Ngom, Mrs. Sadya Touré
Remarks by UN Senegal Resident Coordinator
Siaka Coulibaly
Remarks by UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa
Ahunna Eziakonwa
Remarks by UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel
Abdoulaye Mar Dieye
Remarks by Executive Director – YouthConnekt Africa Hub
Oulie Keita
Remarks by Chief Executive Officer – Generation Unlimited (GenU)
Kevin Frey

Interlude: Video of YouthConnekt Sahel

Official Launch of YouthConnekt Sahel and Senegal Programmes
Keynote Speech by the President of Senegal
H. E. Macky Sall

Interlude: Music & Poem (Young Poet)

Meet the President (Main Auditorium) - Moderated Discussion
H. E. Mr. Macky Sall, President of Senegal (12:30 - 13:30)

In this moderated Q&A session, H.E. Macky Sall meets with young Sahelians to discuss his vision and what needs to be done for youth to drive the positive change and build back better in the Sahel.

Group Photo
Lunch Break, Networking (13:30 - 14:30)
Plenary Session 1

What is the missing link? Youth driving the Sahel’s transformation

It is time to show another side of the Sahel region. Youth is the largest segment of population and have energy, skills, innovations, businesses, networks and above all the attitude to promote the Sahel promise— as a youthful land of opportunities and possibilities. This session will be discussing tangible improvements, promising practices and youth-led solutions to change not only the narratives, but also changing the angle to look at the Sahel.

14:30 – 16:00

Presentation and Panel Discussion

**Keynote Speaker**
Minister of Youth (Sahel)

**Moderator:** Sofia Ba

**Panel**
Young Entrepreneur - Patricia Lamah
Young Community Leader - Achaleke Christian Leke
Private Sector - Traore Faycal

16:00 – 17:00

Sahel Youth Innovation Challenge Pitch (Main Auditorium)

Before the event, the organizers will run a campaign to select best innovative solutions created by young Sahelians to drive positive change in their communities. During the event, the selected innovation challenge champions from all 10 countries will pitch in front of a panel of judges and Forum participants. In addition to the panel, all the online and on-site participants will be requested to vote online for the best innovations. The champions will be ranked by number of votes received and the results of the competition will be announced during the Award Ceremony on last day.

**Chairman:** Jean Philbert Nsengimana (Rwanda)

**Jury panel:** Gilbert Ewehmeh, Sahid Yallou, Fatou Keita Yaovi, Teslem Meissa

17:00 – 18:00

Trade Show Visit, Networking & Partnerships Building – Cocktail + Entertainment
Leading Sahel’s Economic Transformation
Day Two: Wednesday 1 December 2021

Plenary Session 2

Between Vulnerability & Creativity – Cultural, Sports & Creative Industry of the Sahel

Globally, art and fashion are rapidly emerging areas of entrepreneurship which have direct effects on other sectors including education, tourism, travel and hospitality. The creative industry has the potential to create decent jobs for the African youths of today and tomorrow. In this session, art and creative industry experts, young Sahelian artists, fashion gurus, along with inspiring young musicians will talk about the opportunities, misconceptions, benefits, innovations, ideas, and emerging needs of art industry in the Sahel and Africa. Discussion will further highlight how one’s passion can be turned into a lucrative livelihood option.

9:00 – 10:30  Panel Discussion

Panel

Flavour N’abania (TBC), Fally Ipupa (TBC), Samuel Eto’o (TBC), Sadio Mané (TBC), Dudu fait des vidéos / Fatima Zahra Ba (TBC), Nou Alice, Diana Bouli (TBC)

10:30 – 11:00  Coffee Break, Networking

11:00 – 12:30  Parallel Sessions

Embracing Opportunities For Youth In Sahel Borderlands


Empowering African Youth On Their Journey From Learning To Earning – A Session With And For Youth

12:30 – 13:30  Lunch Break, Networking

13:30 – 14:30  Parallel Sessions

Too Big To Ignore: Empowering Young Girls For Accelerated And Inclusive Recovery

Revolutionizing Food & Farming – How Are Youth Engaging In Agri Value Chains?

What Is Possible At Home? Promoting Home-Grown Solutions Of Sahel
Plenary Session 3

Youth Greening the Sahel – Accelerating Green Innovations and Actions towards Greener Sahel

Greening the Sahel is the only way to food security, vegetation and sustainable livelihoods for communities living in the region. According to FAO reports around 10 million hectares will need to be restored each year to reverse the impacts of deforestation, overgrazing and desertification of the Sahel. In simple words, some 166 million hectares of land have been identified for restoration in the survey — nearly three times the size of Kenya or France. This is a massive job that requires integrated community-based efforts that use innovations and indigenous knowledge together to lead the regreening process. Since, youth is the biggest segment of the population, it would be integral to engage, train and support young Sahelians to lead this green revolution to build a greener future for them and generations to come. This session will bring informed discussion on nature-based ecosystems, agroforestry businesses, green construction, effective land management, green innovations to protect the environment and create decent green jobs.

14:30 – 16:00 Panel Discussion
Panel
Vivek Singh, Somachi Chris-Asoluka, Mamady Aminata Touré, Awanah Michael Atanakira, Zibo Abdoulaye Moustapha, A green TEF entrepreneurship Alumni from Nigeria to be nominated

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee Break, Networking

16:30 – 18:30 Leading the Youth Agenda in the Sahel

Youth Ministers across the Sahel region along with selected leaders, stakeholders and youth representatives will discuss strategic policy initiatives to transform Sahel while using skills, expertise and power of youth. It will set a direction for the region by improving youth representation in decision-making and supporting regional programmes, integration policies and cultural and knowledge exchanges in the Sahel.

Moderator:
Panel
Ousman Touray

19:00 – 21:00 Gala Dinner + Entertainment (By Invitation)
Plenary Session 4

Removing the barriers - Sahel Intergenerational and Interfaith Dialogue Series 2021

Youth and adults from different religious backgrounds openly discuss the root causes of insecurity and instability, lack of trust in youth and traditional norms that limit youth’s inclusive participation in development and peace processes. What do older generations think about youth? What are youth’s concerns and perceptions of their role in society? What is the role of faith-based organizations and religious leaders?

9:00 – 11:00 Panel Discussion
Panel
Religious Leader, Traditional Leader/Chief - Chief Souleymane Macky Niang (Mauritania), Young Public Service Leader - Hon. Nana Djoubie Harouna Mathy (MP, Niger), CSO Leader (Young Female) - Fadimatou Iyawa (Cameroon) and Youth Representative (Male) - Ousman Touray (The Gambia, Young Ancestors Foundation)

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee Break, Networking

11:15 – 12:30 Parallel Sessions

A Young Person, An Opportunity! Experience of YouthConnekt Senegal co-creating with youth under the “Emerging Senegal Plan”
Youth Reimagining Peacebuilding & Governance Their Own Way? Tech4peace And E-Governance Innovations By “Gen Y&Z”

12:30 – 13:30 Awards and Official Closing Ceremony
Music, creative performance
Awards Ceremony – Sahel Youth Innovation Challenge 2021 (Panel of Judges, Selected Leaders, Sponsors and Young Influencers)
Forum Declaration (Youth Representative/Youth Council Senegal)
Poem

Closing Remarks
Youth Representative
Oulie Keita
Kevin Frey
Njoya Tikum
Vote of thanks - Minister of Youth - Senegal

13:30 – 14:30 Music, Lunch and Networking